

**Minutes of the  
50th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF AARE  
held on Wednesday 2 December 2020  
in the virtual meeting space of Zoom**



The meeting opened at 3:30 pm AEST (4.30 pm AEDT) with the President, Professor Debra Hayes, in the chair and 34 other members present. Robyn Henderson was the secretary.

**1. Welcome and attendance**

The Chair welcomed those attending and acknowledged the many countries on which the meeting was taking place. She gave an overview of the session:

- (i) keynote post-scripts from the 2019 Conference;
- (ii) the AGM proper, and
- (iii) the Working Party discussion to follow the close of the meeting proper.

**The keynote post-scripts**

Tracey Bunda had sent an audio recording, which was played. She focused on a range of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research issues, including relationality and ethics.

Fazal Rizvi revisited aspects of populism from his 2019 keynote. He focused this year on the fires, the pandemic and the USA election.

Peter Renshaw started by noting personal memorable moments from his 2019 keynote, then he revisited ideas in light of the Pyrocene.

The Chair opened the AGM proper at 4:07 pm AEST (5:07 pm AEDT).

**Present:** See attached list.  
Also in attendance (by invitation):  
Deborah Cracknell (AARE Office and Events Manager)  
Lisa Batten (AARE Office, also a member)  
Fazal Rizvi (Keynote speaker from 2019 Conference)

**Apologies:** Nicole Mockler, Lizzie Knight

**2. Approval of minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting, held in Brisbane on 4 December 2019, had been made available via the AARE website and links to those files had been emailed out to all members. The Secretary explained that two errors in the typing of dates had been corrected.

Robyn Henderson moved that the minutes be regarded as read and accepted as an accurate record of the previous meeting. Seconded: Marie Brennan. Passed.

**3. President's report**

In opening her report, Deb Hayes commented on the remarkable year, especially with the COVID-19 pandemic and its rolling impact on the sector and on the Association. Although this included no annual conference, it did not mean that AARE had been

inactive. However, there had certainly been an impact on membership. Usually at this time of the year, AARE would have between 800 and 1000 members, but membership is currently 333. She applauded the hard work of all members of the Executive Committee during the year and the able and helpful assistance of Deborah Cracknell in the AARE Office.

Deb explained that, while she had plans for her presidency, things had not gone according to plan. Significant changes had come through the writing of a Code of Conduct and through conference processes in relation to acknowledging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research more significantly and authentically, although there is still some work to do in operationalising some of these ideas, including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander strategic plan. She praised the contributions of Melitta Hogarth and Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews as Executive members and noted that Melitta is now leaving the Executive.

Deb referred to the two questions submitted prior to the AGM. She read a question submitted by Jill Blackmore: 'Could the AARE Executive inform the meeting as to their response to the Report submitted in May 2020 by the Working Party on Educational Research in Australia titled *Protecting and extending research in education in Australia*? And second, what action is to be taken with regard to the recommendations?' In responding to the question, Deb highlighted that the pandemic had limited the Executive Committee's capacity to respond as it might have wanted, but it has committed to co-opt a person to focus on advocacy. She referred to Allyson Holbrook's incoming role as President and how she will be making sure that this happens. Deb also explained the dilemma faced by the Executive Committee in relation to motions being put forward at the AGM when not all members are present, and the challenges with the Constitution around this. She emphasised that the Executive did not want to close down discussion or votes, but that it was important to ensure that the broader membership can be involved in decision-making.

Jill Blackmore suggested that colleagues might be able to form a loose coalition of researchers across Australia with AARE, as a way of bringing a strong voice about the many issues that are evident, including the downward trend in research funding, wariness around the Social Sciences and the Humanities, the need to talk with politicians, and so on.

Deb went on to address the second question, which had been submitted by Marie Brennan: 'What monitoring and advocacy has been done on behalf of educational research and educational researchers in this time of upheaval in the sector?' Deb referred to the Working Party report and reminded the meeting that the pandemic had impacted greatly on the Executive's capacity to respond, but she reiterated that after the AGM proper is finished, time has been put aside to talk about the wider range of issues that the Working Party has identified.

### 3. Treasurer's Report

Michele Simons presented the treasurer's report, noting that the audited reports were on AARE's website and were taken as read. She commented on the robust health of the Association at the moment, but explained that long-term sustainability could be a challenge, especially with decreasing membership.

Michele raised a question that had been received from a member about the use of the Commonwealth Bank as the Association's bank. The concern related to the bank's use of Sky News Australia (a space that does not align with AARE's Code of Conduct) as an advertising platform. She talked about how the decision to change bank can have far reaching implications, but explained that the feedback has been taken on board and the cost and other issues will be investigated. She highlighted that it will be important to ascertain what else would be involved, such as checking the bona fides of other banking organisations, because AARE would want to align values. Michele asked if anyone had any questions. There were no questions from the floor.

Deb Hayes thanked Michele for her ongoing work as treasurer.

Michele Simons moved that the financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2020 be accepted.

Seconded by Jill Blackmore.

Passed.

Michele noted that AARE was given a clean bill of health by the auditor. She moved that AARE again appoint Sinclairs Pty Ltd Chartered Accountants as the auditor for the year to 30 June 2021.

Seconded by Ilektra Spandagou.

Approved.

Michele also noted the budget for 2020–2021.

Allyson Holbrook moved that all Executive Committee reports be accepted.

Seconded by Michele Simons.

Passed.

### 4. Confirmation of Results of 2020 Election of Executive Members

Robyn Henderson, as Honorary Secretary and Returning Officer for the ballot for positions on the Executive for 2020, began by explaining the process before announcing the election results. Robyn explained that a call for nominations for six positions on the Executive was sent to all members. Nominations were received for five of the six positions: Secretary, SIGs Co-ordinator, Communications Co-ordinator, Ordinary Member, and Ordinary Member Post-graduate Research Student.

Three of these positions received a single nomination. Under the Constitution, those who nominated are taken to be elected:

Secretary:	Bernie Walker-Gibbs (La Trobe University)
Communications Co-ordinator:	Robert Parkes (The University of Newcastle)
Ordinary Member:	Sara Weuffen (RMITOnline)

The other two positions required a ballot of members, because more than one member nominated, with a simple majority of votes determining who is elected. 151 members voted in the election and the outcomes were:

SIGs Co-ordinator:	Ilektra Spandagou, re-elected (The University of Sydney)
Ordinary Member Post-graduate Research Student:	Natalie Downes (The University of Canberra)

These newly elected members will join two Executive members whose roles change as of the AGM:

President:	Allyson Holbrook (previously President Elect) (The University of Newcastle)
Immediate Past President:	Debra Hayes (previously President) (The University of Sydney)

and the other members of the Executive whose roles continue into 2021:

Treasurer:	Michele Simons (WSU)
AER Editor:	Nicole Mockler (The University of Sydney)
Ordinary Member:	lisahunter (Monash University)
Ordinary Member Early Career Researcher:	Angelique Howell (UQ)
Conference Co-convenors:	Amanda Heffernan (Monash University) and Stewart Riddle (USQ)
Co-opted Indigenous Member:	Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews (UTS)

At this stage, there are two positions vacant:

Research Development Coordinator: An Association member will be co-opted by the Executive in early 2021.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Researcher member: Melitta Hogarth has stepped down from the SIG Co-Convenor role and therefore from the Executive Committee. The SIG has yet to decide who will be their convenor and representative.

Outgoing members of the Executive are:

Aspa Baroutsis, Rosie Barron, Robyn Henderson, Melitta Hogarth, Jo Lampert, Sue Saltmarsh

Robyn moved that the positions on the Executive Committee be approved by members. Seconded by Angelique Howell.

Passed.

It was also moved that appreciation be expressed to outgoing members of the Executive. Passed.

## 5. Final discussion

Deb Hayes asked if there was any general business. Sophie Rudolph asked for opportunities to enable as much discussion as possible at AGMs in future and opportunities for motions to be taken from the floor. Deb responded that she was very aware of the importance of the AGM as a space to discuss issues and to get the Association's house in order. She said that the Executive would work on a clearer process for moving forward and that Robyn would be briefing the new secretary as part of the changeover. Jill Blackmore supported Sophie's comments. Annette Woods emphasised the importance for having space for discussion about emerging issues at the AGM. This raised the need to find ways of involving the broader membership of AARE. Deb Hayes explained that Allyson Holbrook had already noted that the constitution is an important way to move forward, along with membership and advocacy, and this will mean that there is a busy year ahead.

Deb Hayes highlighted that special meetings had not been considered in the past, but they could be useful in the future. She noted Annette Wood's comment in chat that there is room for one more co-opted person on the Executive. She said that there was no intention that the advocacy role would take away from the Research Development Co-ordinator role.

Anna Sullivan talked briefly to her report on ARC outcomes. She requested that AARE share the analysis with the Australian Council of Deans in Education (ACDE), ask questions and act. She also asked that the analysis be shared with the ARC. Deb Hayes explained that Allyson Holbrook was already working with Anna and that Michele Simons is now the president of the ACDE. Michele confirmed that the ACDE would welcome working with AARE and to develop a productive relationship.

## 6. Date and Venue of Next Annual General Meeting

Deb Hayes confirmed that the next AGM will be on Wednesday 1 December 2021. The venue will depend on whether a face-to-face meeting is possible at that time or whether the meeting will need to be virtual. She thanked everyone for their involvement in the AGM and formally closed the meeting at 4:51 pm AEST (5:51 pm AEDT).

Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Allyson Holbrook, President

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Members present at the 2020 AGM**

Aspa Baroutsis

Rosie Barron

Lisa Batten

Jill Blackmore

Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews

Marie Brennan

Debby Cunningham

Janet Dutton

Daya Weerasinghe

Christine Grice

Debra Hayes

Amanda Heffernan

Michael Henderson

Robyn Henderson

Allyson Holbrook

Melitta Hogarth

Angelique Howell

Jo Lampert

lisahunter

Nurwanto Nurwanto

Jo-Anne Reid

Peter Renshaw

Stewart Riddle

Bev Rogers

Sophie Rudolph

Kathy Rushton

Michele Simons

Kim Snepvangers

Ilektra Spandagou

Anna Sullivan

Joanne Tai

Peter Twining

Bernie Walker-Gibbs

Sara Weuffen

Annette Woods

## **Previous members present at the AGM:**

Kim Davies

Jo Higginson

Xuan Pham

Lew Zipin

## Minutes of the Working Party discussion that followed the AGM

### Present:

Aspa Baroutsis	Michael Henderson	Bev Rogers
Rosie Barron	Robyn Henderson	Sophie Rudolph
Lisa Batten	Jo Higginson	Kathy Rushton
Jill Blackmore	Allyson Holbrook	Michele Simons
Gawaian Bodkin-Andrews	Melitta Hogarth	Kim Snepvangers
Marie Brennan	Angelique Howell	Ilektra Spandagou
Debby Cunningham	Jo Lampert	Anna Sullivan
Kim Davies	lisahunter	Joanne Tai
Janet Dutton	Nurwanto Nurwanto	Peter Twining
Daya Weerasinghe	Xuan Pham	Bernie Walker-Gibbs
Christine Grice	Jo-Anne Reid	Sara Weuffen
Debra Hayes	Peter Renshaw	Annette Woods
Amanda Heffernan	Stewart Riddle	Lew Zipin

The meeting began at 4.51 pm AEST (5.51 pm AEDT).

Marie Brennan spoke on behalf of the standing committee. She referred to the report that was sent out to members and pointed out that she thought the motions should be accepted at this meeting since the Working Party was not told to lodge motions 21 days in advance. She referred to points in the report: the reduction of schools of education, teaching only roles, casualisation, invisible workloads in relation to teaching and research, all of which existed well before COVID-19 came on the scene, but said that the pandemic had allowed them to continue. She also talked about changes in universities that had impacted (e.g., restructuring of universities and work forces more generally), as well as inappropriate measures for measuring the quality of research, the narrowing of purposes of universities, and the general shutting down of dissent and critique. She emphasised that the Working Party sees an urgent need for action, following discussions at the last three AGMs. She described the Working Party as an example of strong slow activism and explained that it had had brought together CADRE, the ATEA President, ACDE, Working Party members and Anna Sullivan's work. The Working Party wants to see urgent action in a more public way and had hoped that the 2019 AGM would result in advocacy work and a media campaign by the Association, and the involvement of other groups in the education field.

She referred to the report's recommendations and asked that AARE advocate with governance bodies and other associations, to document and assess the medium and long term implications, to lobby for an education-specific research fund, and to keep the Working Party going. She asked if others would like to speak, discuss points already raised or ask questions.

Lew Zipin added that AARE is in a position to do this work, including talking about topics such as the purposes and future of academic work, as it is not under institutional management and not reliant on external bodies for funding. In other words, the Association is able to take action without putting academics under pressure from employers etc. He argued that 'it's time for courageous action.'

Allyson Holbrook noted that it would be good for organisations to be pulling in the same direction and suggested that the ARC should be one of the first targets. She also talked about

developing a hierarchy of tasks in conjunction with members of the Working Party. Annette Woods thanked Allyson for saying that AARE would move on advocacy. She also asked for a clarification of terms, as the Working Party had also been called a Standing Committee and a group during the discussions so far. She noted that this was a confusing space. Allyson agreed and said that this issue was tied with the constitutional issues and that it would be worked through.

Jill Blackmore talked about the challenges of trying to set up a consortium and getting academics to come to agreement about what to do. She suggested that it is important to know what the action will look like, what it will do, and how it will work, with a specific starting point such as the ARC. Sophie Rudolph talked about the importance of getting people together and how the Working Party had been an example of intergenerational research. She offered a vote of thanks to Marie for leading the Working Party and to the other members for their willingness to be involved. Lew Zipin supported Sophie's comment about intergenerational research and talked about the lack of pathways for those with research dispositions and capabilities. He said that early career academics need real chances to both teach and research and that it is not enough to just stop the contraction of roles. It is also necessary to work towards restoration, expansion and a repurposing of research.

Jill Blackmore talked about the loss of 30,000 academics in the past six months, including casuals, and said it is essential to represent what is happening in the academic workforce, including the gap in building research capacity. Marie Brennan reminded everyone of the 1990s and the sudden expansion then dramatic loss of education academics. She said it will be important to work closely with CADRE, or a nominated person in each university, in order to monitor what is happening, especially since there has been the loss of both senior and junior academics. Bringing together ATEA, ACDE including CADRE, and AARE is going to be a really important move. Michele Simons said she had personal experience of the mass exodus of academics that Marie referred to and said that there were some lessons to be learned from that history. She also highlighted that the teaching profession is hungry for more contact with education academics, as they are unhappy with the current expectation that they are simply receivers of technical advice. Rosie Barron supported what had been said about the intergenerational process and explained that she had found it very valuable. She talked about the personal impact of what has been happening and said that it is difficult for many early career academics to see a viable professional future.

With no further comments, Marie drew the meeting to a close. She made the point that she wanted to note the work of the Working Party and ask the Executive Committee to organise a Special General Meeting. Some discussion followed about the process of requesting a special meeting and what it says in the constitution. Allyson confirmed that the Executive would take it forward. Marie will send the notes from the meeting about the report. Deb Cracknell said there would be a call for agenda items for the Special General Meeting and that Anna's information will also be included. It was suggested that the meeting be after January, possibly after the Executive has met in February.

Allyson thanked Deb Hayes for her work as President in the last two years.

Marie closed this part of the meeting at 5:28 pm AEST (6:28 pm AEDT).